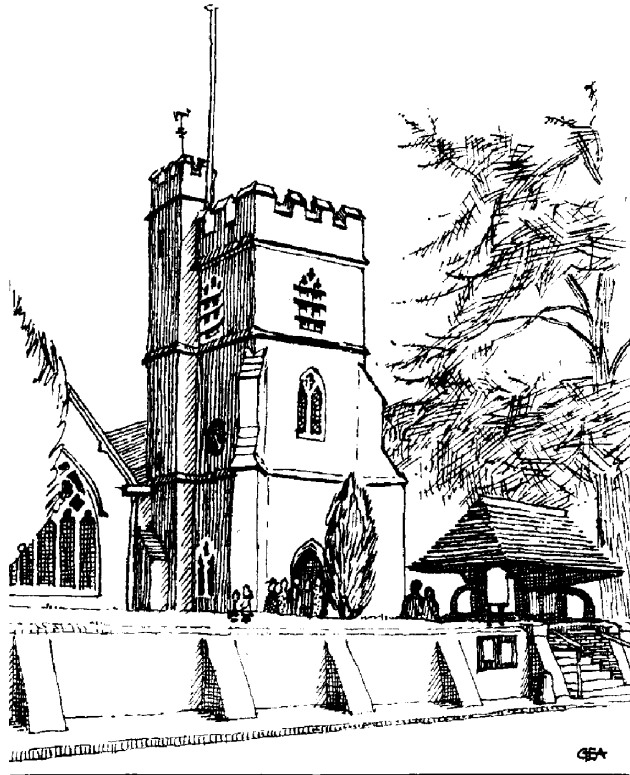


Church of St Mary-the-Virgin
Horsell

BOOK 2



The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday, 23rd May 2021, 11.15 a.m.

Report of Church Organisations for 2020

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All Age Service

On the departure of Sarah in January, I took over leading the All-Age worship team, which consists of



Michael Couper, Sue Dunsford, Gill Squibb, Lesley Templeman and Roz Haynes. Elaine Brown joined the team up until August. We collaboratively produce a monthly act of worship suitable for everyone whatever their age or stage of faith. One of our aims is to try and include different members of the congregation in helping with the different aspect of the service. It was good pre-Covid pandemic to include those children who were attendance in the dramatized readings, along with members of the Open the Book team and other members of the congregation.

As we faced the closure of the church for much of the year, we continued to produce an order of service often in the form of a more 'All age' Morning Prayer service, for people to follow at home, which was posted on the church website and sent out via the church cascade system.

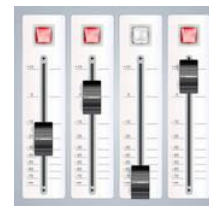
In between lockdowns we managed some service in church, one such time was for our Harvest service, which included part of a Harvest service put together by Christian Aid, and a collection of money for Christian Aid, along with foodstuff and toiletries for the 'York Road Project'

I would particularly like to thank the team for their help in planning and putting together the Good Friday morning service and for their input into the services when we have been back in church.

Marcus Brookfield

Audio Visual

The church has a good audio visual system installed which we use regularly in services. Of course it has had a bit of a rest during 2020 but the small band of operators were on hand when required.



This last year has highlighted the possible advantage of live streaming the service (broadcasting the video and audio on the internet) so those unable to come to Church are not left out. Eventually it is hoped that the video signal we see on the monitors in Church will be what is streamed so the words seen at home will be appropriate.

Barry Squibb heads up this group and would be happy to hear from anyone who likes to fiddle with controls, one or two extra volunteers would be useful, particularly as a bit more person power might be needed if we start to live stream regularly. Of course the necessary training will be provided. It does involve being at Church early and sometimes doing a bit of physical work with cables and microphones but isn't as complicated as some think when seeing the mixing desk at the back. It would be something that the older young people may like to get involved with, after all they are better with technology than many adults. It is anticipated that they could double up with the main operator to start with to learn but hopefully would be able to take over

once skill levels had developed. We have one budding youngster helping at the moment, but that was some time ago in more normal times!. Again talk to Barry (01483 760796).

Barry Squibb

Bell Ringing

Well, normal Sunday Service ringing started on the 5th January and, with the exception of the 26th January and 2nd February, when there were insufficient ringers, ringing continued, weekly, until the 15th March, after which COVID-19 Regulations forced the complete closure of all churches.



- In compliance with HM Government, Church of England and CCCBR guidelines, all places of worship have been closed, until further notice (UFN).
- As a result, all Towers are closed UFN, ringing and access to Towers has been curtailed, as have weddings and funerals.
- The last Sunday when normal service ringing took place, was Sunday, 15th March, 2020, after which the building was secured.
- To enable the Church Wardens to comply with, and undertake, the forthcoming Quinquennial Inspection, I was commissioned to carry out a risk assessment covering the entire church tower, the bells and ringing, itself.
- Following a briefing meeting with Mike Couper on the 29th July, this was undertaken, as a matter of urgency, on Wednesday, 5th August, 2020, to enable restricted ringing to take place for the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day, on the 15th August, 2020. My Report was handed to Mike Couper at 10 am on Sunday, 9th August, and subsequently agreed, with thanks. One copy of the report has been posted in the Tower and another, retained with other papers relating to the current year.
- Nationally, there was no ringing for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day but, following the abovementioned Risk Assessment, both at St Mary's and by the CCCBR, I was able to ring the Tenor 75 times, after a 2-minutes' silence and the recitation of a Proclamation created by Bruno Peek to commemorate VJ Day, the end of World War II. A certificate to this effect is framed in the ringing chamber.
- Although no wedding ringing was possible, a bell was requested for the funeral of a former ringer, Ronald Taylor on the 15th September. I was pleased to fulfil his wish and declined a fee; such ringing is entirely discretionary.
- Remembrance Sunday was a casualty of the second lockdown, as all parades were cancelled. Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial and, as the clock had stopped, the Tenor was rung, half-muffled, for 10 minutes before 10:59, when the No. 5 was rung 11 times, to mark the hour and the beginning of the 2-Minutes Silence, and again, twice, to mark the end.

- Another casualty of the lockdown, was the Annual Tower Dinner, scheduled to take place on the 7th April, which is a great opportunity for an informal social gathering, including other halves.
- Finally, as I was the sole ringer authorised to enter the tower and ring, as well as being a regular member of the congregation, I have rung the No. 4 bell before the 10 o'clock service, on every Sunday from the 22nd March, 2020, when services were permitted, Christmas Day, before the 10.00 am Communion Service, being the last.

Alan Nichols - Hon Treasurer

Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF)

BRF produces a range of Bible study resources including materials specially prepared for the very young and the elderly.



Members of this congregation are currently using 'New Daylight' or 'Guidelines'. 'New Daylight' is described by the publishers as 'ideal for anybody wanting an accessible yet stimulating aid to spending time with God each day, deepening their faith and their knowledge of scripture.' I have been using it for a number of years and can highly recommend it. 'Guidelines' offers more in-depth study. Its declared intention is to 'enable all its readers to interpret and apply the biblical text with confidence in today's world, while helping to equip church leaders as they meet the challenges of mission and disciple building.' Both include ideas for prayer and reflection and are also available in large print or online.

Please ask me if you would like to know more or to have a look at samples of past materials.

Barbara Brown

Churches Together in Woking (CTiW)



CTiW exists as an ecumenical forum for churches in Woking to work together in a wide variety of ways, their major event being the Good Friday Act of Witness, for the second year running, this was much scaled down, due to the pandemic, with only six participants permitted, including the narrator and technical staff, and no audience, it was filmed but this suffered from technical difficulties. World Day of Prayer on 5 March, locally organised by Gill Squibb was also much scaled down, as was the Annual Service of Christian Unity on 24 January. Activities such as Street Angels have been suspended, but it is hoped that Christian Aid Week starting 10 May can go ahead with URF streaming a service.

Regular updates from CTiW have featured in the St Marys cascade.

Brian Sheriff

Churchyard

The long-delayed repair to the south wall remains an impediment to Woking Council taking over responsibility for the closed churchyard. The Council reports that they only received one reply to their request for tenders based on the programme of works drawn up by their Building Consultants, Dovetail, and have therefor retendered the work, with a deadline of the end of April for replies, our neighbours have been informed.



Serco recommenced their regular visits to the churchyard on 16 April, we are grateful to Woking Council for authorising these visits, prior to them officially taking over responsibility for a closed churchyard.

The Probation Service which played a major role in improving the churchyard in 2019, with regular Saturday visits by van loads of lads on community payback work, have agreed to resume visits later in the summer.

It is also hoped that 'adopt a graves' and Thursday club members who make a major contribution to specific areas will return again from 8 May.

Brian Sheriff

Finance & Property Committee

Whilst other activities may have been curtailed by Covid-19 the matters of church and churchyard maintenance continued, grass still grew and walls still crumbled.



I'm pleased to say that this year SERCO took over the mantle of looking after the churchyard and I think everyone was pleasantly surprised at what a rather fine job they did. They certainly keep on top of grass and with other helpers, such as those through Adopt a Grave, the churchyard was kept very neat and tidy. A big thankyou to everyone who helped with this. However, in relation to the final and formal handover to WBC to maintain the churchyard, their churchyard survey has thrown up a grave issue with the inadequacy of the existing buttressing of one of the graveyard walls and unfortunately it will need costly repair prior to handover.

All of the Quinquennial work identified in the Quinquennial Report has now been completed aside from mending the sound proofing louvres in the bell tower. It should be noted that overall the report did not find a great deal of remedial work was required since the last inspection. This is without doubt was owing to the diligent overseeing of routine maintenance by the late Roy Jarvis, who for many years, until his recent retirement, kept the church and churchyard spick and span.

The SAR extension has been moving slowly forwards with the architects now having been chosen and provisional plans being drawn up for perusal. Again a vote of thanks for those involved in that sub-committee for their diligence and perseverance.

Finally, the Faculty was approved to be able to remove/relocate the pews in front of the organ to be able to create a much needed flexible space to be able to more easily support various activities such as Messy Church, talks, exhibitions etc.

Adrian Harvey Chair, Fin and Prop Committee

Flower Arrangers

The year was a different and strange year for all of us not least for the Flower Arrangers. We have had very little to do compared with other years. We have had no weddings; those that had been booked have been re-arranged for 2021. When the lockdown started we decided to put vases of flowers in the Church as this took less time and only needed one person to do them. It also cut down our costs and we felt flowers would brighten up the Church for the Wednesday morning private prayer time. Remembrance Sunday was the exception when we arranged lots of poppies. I would like to thank Ros O'Connor, Sue Sheriff, Joy Potter and Ann O'Dell for doing these flowers each week as the rest of the team had to self-isolate so were unable to go to the Church. My thanks also go to Joy and Tony Marson for keeping us within our budget.



June Lock

Handbell Club at Horsell Church of England School

The Handbell Club ran for the first few months of 2020, until the schools locked down.

We look forward to returning when the conditions are right for us to do so.



Marcus Brookfield, Roz Haynes & Mike Couper

Home Communion

During lockdown we have not been able to take communion to the house bound but have been keeping in touch with those on our list by phone or e-mail.

Margaret Johnson



Horsell Church of England Junior School

January was a busy month. The Ofsted inspectors telephoned and arrived in school two days later. Staff, governors, parents and pupils were all involved, and the school maintained its GOOD rating. The inspector commented that 'Pupils at Horsell are polite, well-mannered and proud of their school. Pupils learn in an environment with a strong Christian ethos, which is accepting of all families, regardless of faith or belief.'



Rev Sarah Hayes was thanked for her valued contribution to the school at a special assembly as she left Horsell and moved on to her new role working with the Waterways Chaplaincy.

Music workshops were enjoyed by many pupils and parents embraced family learning events where the school shared learning methods on various subjects. The school's Eco committee were busy working with the whole school on environmental issues and the school achieved the Eco Bronze Award. Inter-house competitions, Science week and sports matches all took place amidst the rising worry of the Covid pandemic.

World Book Day 2020 invited children to dress up as their favourite villain or hero from a book they had read, and an informal music evening gave pupils the chance to perform in front of an audience.

The school closure in March, due to the pandemic, was not unexpected and the school had been planning for such an eventuality to ensure learning continued. Mrs Wand and other staff quickly increased their IT skills, collective worship sessions were successfully uploaded to the school website and the Open the Book team from St Mary's continued via a weekly video of a Bible story, filmed outside. Children who did not have computer access at home were sent hard copies of work, remote learning apps were trialled, and virtual class meet ups were organised.

Year 6 pupils were able to return to school at the beginning of June. There were numerous rules, risk assessments, procedures, 'bubbles', and a vigorous cleaning regime to keep everyone safe.

Year 5 pupils then returned on a part-time basis and years 3 & 4 came in small groups for just one day before the end of term.

An outside, socially distanced prize giving for year 6 was possible on a very small scale and year 6 produced a video, Horsell's Got Talent, instead of their usual production.

There was a lot of excitement in September when all pupils were able to return. There were even more rules, staggered drop-off and pick-ups, class bubbles, new procedures for lunch and of course hand washing & cleaning.

Children had been isolated during lockdown and so aspects of well-being, mental health and safety were given priority along with learning and catch-up. A crowdfunding for a Nurture Space saw the old music storage room transformed into a warm, relaxing space for those children requiring support.

School sports, music, inter-house events and other clubs restarted, and children once more had the stability, sense of community and hope for the future that school brings.

Harvest festival gifts were delivered to the York Road project and whole school virtual assemblies were possible, using Microsoft teams.

As the term and year ended, year 3 produced a Nativity, pupils were able to enjoy a Christmas lunch and as the school closed for the holidays, covid infections were rising giving uncertainty about the new term

2020 was a year like no other and enormous thanks must go to Mrs Wand & the staff for always putting the education & welfare of the children first. The school also thanks St Mary's church for their continuing support and prayers.

Anne Smith on behalf of the Governors

Horsell Matters

2020 has not been an easy year for anyone but Horsell Matters has endeavoured to keep up the spirits of the parish and the village. It has been a challenge but one which we have enjoyed. At the departure of Rev Sarah the magazine lost an excellent editor but luckily not the editorial team of Jan Mihell and Mike Couper. I am not sure how I volunteered to fill her shoes but evidently I did and I have very much enjoyed the experience.



A new editor is always going to put their own personality on a magazine and determine how it moves forward. I was grateful to have such a strong base upon which to build and some very enthusiastic contributors. Nevertheless perhaps this is a good time to explain how I saw the way forward. My overarching vision is that Horsell Matters is the voice of the parish and the village. The first is relatively easy in that there are clear parameters and articles which must be included. These still are, and we have been blessed by having Roy Wernham write the homily during the Vacancy. We have all been very grateful for his contributions and leadership. Personally, I have relied on his professional and literate contributions throughout the year. The team have continued to bring their own contributions to the table and for that I am grateful. My vision of making the magazine inclusive of all aspects of village life has been supported by them. We have tried to support village camaraderie, whenever we can. We have sought out interesting villagers with stories to tell and I have encouraged anyone with a view to share that with us all.

The balance of the articles in the magazine is strongly in favour of articles rather than advertising but I make no apology for including the latter. It pays for it all. Knaphill printers have been supportive throughout the year ensuring that the magazine has come out in one way or another all year. I thank them for their help. I have tried to change the layout of the magazine to make it more modern and easier to read. There are more photographs and a broader approach. I have been grateful for all the messages of support from a broad spectrum.

During the year, the magazine has always been produced. In print or digitally it has been available to all through the cascade system, the parish website and the distributors who walk the miles around the village. I would like to thank all those who have made that possible especially the distributors who under the guidance of Karen and Peter Saunbury have collected their piles and ensured every household has a copy.

2021 will be a lighter more normal year, we all hope We have a new vicar and can come out of hiding. However, the team will go on in its inimitable way joined by Olya Lutsenko, who will be a great addition. I would though wish to close with a personal thank you to Mike and Jan who have worked tirelessly - because it is hard work – and with such good humour. I can assure you the editorial meetings are full of laughter and good humour. So I look forward to the next year and bring on the cake!

Sue Rowlatt – Editor

JAM (Jesus and Me) and Us!

JaM continued to provide activities for our children and young people aged from three years old upwards during the 10am Sunday service.



Our aim in JaM is to help the children understand God's way for each of us through exploring the stories of the Bible and encourage them to grow in faith through a variety of different activities which help them apply what they have learnt to their lives.

JaM ran throughout January to mid-March, and then in October and December with Covid-19 procedures in place.

During January to March, we had two to nine children/young people attend on a weekly basis which when averaged out is around seven children/young people attending weekly. Although on Sarah Hayes' last Sunday we had a record breaking twenty-eight children/young people and for a baptism in March, sixteen children/young people. Overall number were quite fluid.

In the summer we lost two of our most regular members as their family moved out of the area.

For the sessions in October and December we had a regular attendance of one child and a further three at a couple of the other sessions.

The inconsistency of attendance and the wide age range of the children makes planning and leading the session challenging, as we can have three to thirteen plus years olds in

the same session. Ideally it would be good to be able to split the group, but the availability of leaders and helpers means this is not possible currently.

In the way of leaders and helpers we currently have one regular monthly leader and one quite occasional leader in addition to me, plus two regular helpers, so parents are often drafted in to meet safeguarding guidance, which is not always ideal. I am extremely grateful to the leaders and helpers for the immense time and energy they put into planning and leading JaM or helping out.

In the many months in which we have been unable to run JaM in person we have sought to keep contact with families through the development of material (JaM @ home) which can be used by families in their homes, this features a variety of activities enabling families to engage with the Lectionary reading and theme of the day each Sunday.

We are particularly keen to ensure that we can sustain this work and seek to continue to engage all those children who attended. Mindful of this we are urgently on the lookout for extra leaders and helpers, if you feel you may be able to help, please speak to me.

Marcus Brookfield

Meditation

The monthly Sunday evening half-hour meditation session continued throughout the past year, mostly via Zoom, with around 6-12 participants each time. Leading the sessions is shared between several regular members. The aim is to provide an opportunity for silent reflection, to focus on God's spirit within, and this is valued by those who attend.



Elaine Davies

Messy Church

Messy Church Messy Church is approaching its third year and we continued to run it on a monthly basis, either on the 2nd or 3rd Sundays of each month, except for August and December.

Our Messy Church runs from 4 – 5.30pm and includes a time of craft and fun activities, a short act of worship and concludes with a shared tea.

We have been amazed by the success of Messy Church and how well it has been received, drawing in many families who would never attend a Sunday morning service.



We were only able run session in person between January and March, where numbers attending the sessions topped 100 in January and February and were slightly lower at 75, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March.

I would like to pay tribute to the great team of around 15 who continue to be the power behind the sessions. Thanks, must go to each of the team for all the time, commitment, and energy they invest in helping to plan and lead crafts, set up and clear away, make, and serve refreshments and help with the short act of worship.

It has been encouraging to see that several church members have attended to support and see for themselves what goes on. We are also particular thankful for those who helped clear the North aisle, following the morning service, moving the pews, and setting up the tables for the shared tea,

Messy Church is a great opportunity to make Church more accessible and draw in people who we have no real links with church, and it also builds on the tentative links we have with children and families through our toddler groups, baptisms, and work through Open the book.

Several of our regular Messy church families see this as church for them and are embracing being part of this new congregation. We are also finding that increasing numbers of families are seeking to help out through providing food for the tea or staying behind to help with the tidy up.

With the advent of the Covid-19 restrictions we have been unable to hold Messy Church in person since March, but we have sought to keep in contact with those who would regularly attend through the development of a session which we have put together, including various crafts and activities for them to do in their homes around the theme, with suggested questions for discussion and a short act of worship (Celebration), which have included links to the songs we would usually do on YouTube, various ways to engage with the linked Bible story and an interactive prayer activity.

Marcus Brookfield

Mid-Week Communion Service

Midweek Communion Service continued until March 18th then the COVID restrictions where in place and we didn't have another service in church in 2020. We hope to start this service again in late 2021.



Michael Couper

Ministry to Care Homes

The redeveloped Horsell Lodge, one of the care homes in the parish, was opened early in 2020. I had the privilege of being shown round and discussed the possibility of resuming short monthly services there. Sadly, there is no piano there, so we hope to explore other possibilities.



Kettlewell House had just one service (in January) prior to the first lockdown. We look forward to being involved again, once permission is granted.

Michael Couper

Music at St Mary's

Has been very limited during the year since March due to COVID 19, but since services started towards the end of the year, we have been listening to music chosen by Mike Couper and Marcus Brookfield. We were told not to sing but that we could hum.



Michael Couper

On Your Own Lunch Group

The On Your Own Lunch-ers welcomed 2020 with their usual enthusiasm and in now-traditional style, 16 of us enjoying a delicious and convivial meal at The Red Lion on 26th January. However, it proved to be our first and last get-together of the year, the Covid pandemic precluding any more of our usual, 8 weekly, bring and share lunches in St. Andrew's room. However, we greatly look forward to resuming them, and to socialising with each other again, as soon as circumstances allow.



Our lunches normally take place on the last Sunday of alternate months. Dates are notified in advance in the weekly church notices. If you're a seasoned member of the group, do join us again when we re-start. If you live on your own and haven't tried us yet, please do so – we are a very friendly, welcoming bunch! Contact Hilary Mills on hcmills@btinternet.com with any queries.

Hilary Mills

Open the Book

We are now into our eighth year of Open the Book presentations. Until the March lock-down, we were going into the Junior School on a weekly basis, the Village School on a fortnightly basis and St Andrew's School on an occasional basis to perform and bring alive the stories of the Bible to children who may not otherwise be able to experience them.



Since the May half-term we produced a weekly recorded assembly for the schools to use either in school with the key workers or at home. We also produced one for every fortnight during the summer holiday. This has continued since the schools went back in September. These films have also been made available to the other schools and on the church web-site and have been well-received by some of the adult parishioners!

We have held team meetings on zoom where we have shared a Bible story and fellowship together.

We have a great group of volunteers, with a wide age range and set of different talents and we are very grateful to: Marcus Brookfield, Ruth Carter, Mike Couper, Glenys Craig, Sue Dunsford, Roz Haynes, Julie Hills (*), Miriam Horrocks, Maria Greenwood (*), Jan Jameson, Sarah and Isabella Manning, Mary Mather, Jan Mihell, Elizabeth Parenti,

Karen Rapley, Jennifer Richards and Gill Squibb. (Those with a star by their name are from other churches).

As always, we are particularly grateful to Mrs Collier at the Junior School for her continued support.

Marcus Brookfield, Roz Haynes & Mike Couper

Outward Giving

Due to the coronavirus pandemic there has been a significant decrease in Outward Giving in 2020 compared with the previous two years. In 2020 we gave a total of £12,532 compared to just over £17,000 in both 2018 and 2019, a decrease of £4,700 or 27%.



Special collections decreased from nearly £3,000 to £1,000 (a decrease of 67%) and direct giving decreased from about £2,000 to just under £400 (a decrease of 80%). Much of the fall is due to the loss of fundraising events and donations at both Friday Pop In Coffee and Sunday Coffee which could not take place. Another loss, not included in the figures above, was the cancellation of Christian Aid Week 2020 house-to-house and church collections which normally raise over £1,000 and are paid directly to Christian Aid.

What has happened at St Mary's is not unusual. Charities have had much of their normal fundraising curtailed. Given this situation it was important to find new ways of facilitating giving and online giving was available for both the Christian Aid Harvest collection and the Christingle collection.

Our giving of 10% of our general, undesignated and unrestricted income was discussed in late November. The amount we had to allocate, based on unrestricted income minus the designated funds for church growth, was estimated to be £11,000. This is £1,000 less than for the last three years, reflecting the fall in church income due to the pandemic. We looked at St Mary's giving from church funds, special collections and other fundraising in previous years and considered the impact of the pandemic. We noted that the cancellation of Christian Aid Week in May would have impacted our support for Christian Aid this year. We also looked at support given by Sunday Coffee and Friday Pop In Coffee to various groups.

We decided to continue donations to our church school, Horsell CoE Junior School (£3,000), Christian Aid (£1,250) and York Road Project (£1,500) at their 2019 amounts. Donations to Engage (£700), Bible Reading Fellowship (£2,000), Bible Society (£1,250), and Five Talents to support their project in the Diocese of Butere, Kenya (£1,000) were continued but reduced. In addition we decided to give £300 to support the Young Carers at Woking High School to replace the regular donations from Pop In Coffee.

Details are shown in the Outward Giving page of the Financial Statements.

Ruth Carter, Sarah Hayes, Garry Rutherford & Gill Squibb

Pastoral Care Team

Our Team meetings were held on 5th March, 30th July and 29th October, the last two in accordance with the Covid 19 restrictions in force at the time.



March saw the official resignation, for personal reasons, of our former Team Leader, Gill Walsh. We acknowledged that her considerable pastoral skills would be much missed but were grateful for the significant contribution she had made to our pastoral ministry at St. Mary's.

Barbara Brown attended a basic pastoral skills training module in January and February. This module is the first step in new training arrangements for pastoral ministry introduced by the Diocese in December 2019.

In accordance with safeguarding requirements, formal job descriptions for all Team members were agreed in August 2020.

Due to varying restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic throughout the year, many aspects of our ministry had to be curtailed - home communion, pastoral visiting indoors, On Your Own lunch (except for our initial, New Year lunch at The Red Lion), Pop-In Coffee, after-service prayer in church and the distribution of Harvest Festival flowers to the bereaved.

There have been three exceptions: firstly, at the start of the first lockdown in March, a plan was devised whereby each member of the Team, augmented by two volunteers from the congregation, maintained regular telephone contact with 2-5 members of our church family – mostly but not exclusively those living alone – to reassure them of the continuity of our care, to offer any help permitted under Covid rules, such as shopping, and generally to try to minimise any isolation felt. This outreach remains in place at the time of writing.

Secondly, from July onwards, two members of the Throwleigh Lodge team were able to visit monthly and minister to a few of the more able residents in an outside, covered area.

Thirdly, our card-sending on behalf of the whole church to those in adverse circumstances, as well as those celebrating significant landmarks in their lives, continued throughout the year.

The current members of the Team are: Barbara Brown, Carmen Duncan-Brown, Janet Johnson, Margaret Johnson, Hilary Mills and Angela Murphy. Please contact any one of us if you feel you need help. The church office will have our contact details if they're not already known to you.

Hilary Mills

Pop In Coffee

We were only open until lockdown took its toll on us. As you all know it is a popular point of outreach at St Mary's providing an opportunity for anyone (old or young, members of the church or passers-by) to have a cup of tea/coffee and cake. We look forward to reopening later in the year.



We have been unable to support the Young Carers at Woking High School, but as part of Outward Giving the monthly contribution of £25 has been given on our behalf.

Mike Couper on behalf of Gill Walsh

Peaceful Praise and Prayer

Usually held monthly on a Sunday evening, lasting around 40 minutes, this only took place a few times during 2020, due to the restrictions caused by Covid-19. It was decided by consensus to wait until 'normal' service is resumed when it can take place again at church. The structure offers a peaceful time of praise and worship, including a few songs/hymns, contemplative music such as Taizé, quiet reflection on a reading, and open prayer.



Elaine Davies

Servers

The year started, normally, until the retirement of Sarah Hayes and her final celebration of Holy Communion at the 10:00 am service on Sunday, 19th January. Peter Brown had every intention of "holding the fort" until a successor could be found, and appointed but, in the event, he and Elaine, who had been on a waiting list for some time, were offered a house in Alton which was, literally, a heaven-sent opportunity they could not refuse. Peter continued to celebrate at communion services, supported by Roy Wernham, who led other services and shared the role with Mike Couper and Marcus Brookfield, after that. His last service at St Mary's was on Sunday, 30th August.



During the remainder of the Interregnum, we were supported by a number of visiting clergy, mostly retired, and I must congratulate the team of Servers for their ability to fit in, and support, our visitors and their individual styles of worship.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank each member of the team, who has supported St Mary's during the last year.

Alan Nichols Head Server alan.nichols2@ntlworld.com 01483 767852

Special Events for Children & Families

With face-to-face activities suspended for much of the year we attempted to stay in contact with many of the families who would usually attend our events and activities through regular emails of links to resources and activities in addition to the regular JaM @ home and Messy Church @ home sessions, to help families engage with faith at home.



This included ideas to engage with the stories of Holy week, Good Friday and Easter through video clips, crafts, activity sheets and recipes.

Links to the Church of England's Faith at home videos and collective worship sessions, for both primary and secondary age children were also sent to families throughout the year.

In September we sent out a survey to those families who would usually attend our regular events about the resources we had been emailing out and what they thought would be helpful going forward. We had about 30 responses, which were interesting. Thank you to Ruth Carter and Lucy Leach for their work on this.

In place of our usually Christingle services, we put together a simple act of worship around the construction of the Christingle and the theme of light.

Christingle bags were put together for collection over several days, these included all the components required for families to make their own Christingles at home, a star Christmas tree topper, to decorate and use in a prayer activity and a cobblestone which we asked individuals to decorate with an illustration from the Christmas story and then return them for display outside St Andrew's Room. A big thank you to the team of Helen Gravette, Lesley Templeman, Gill Squibb, Jennifer Richards, Peter Adamthwaite and Mike Couper for putting the Christingle bags together. 190 of these bags were collected and used by families in our local community.

In addition to this, thank you to Roz Haynes for putting together the nativity scene which we would normally use as part of our Christingle/Crib services, in the St Andrew's Room window, for all to view over the Christmas period. Thank you also to the members of the Open the book team who decorated the lychgate with winter greenery and lights.

Marcus Brookfield

St Andrew's Room Development

As authorised by PCC, a QS, William Swanson of Ainsleys was appointed, and costed the currently designed alterations at a total indicative build cost of £515k, plus professional fees and contingency, increasing to £574k with a second floor over the large meeting room and £652k for an alternative demolish and rebuild option. In all cases professional and legal costs may be as high as £100k with a contingency of 10%.



The PCC are thanked for submitting comments on the design, which have been considered at two meetings of the development committee. Revised requirements have now been submitted to our architects to inform a revised design drawing.

Brian Sheriff

St Mary's Young People's Group

This group is now in its fourth year and has evolved from St Mary's 9-13's group as a number of the young people who often attend are



now 13+. Many of the young people who attend are not regulars on a Sunday and many only have tentative links with the church. The aim of this group is to help us as a church maintain links with the young people who we have contact with and provide fun, friendship and fellowship for the young people, in the hope of creating a peer group that will support them as they navigated adolescence.

The group generally meets on the final Saturday of the month, although due to the Covid-19 pandemic we only met in person during January and February when we had 13 young people in January and had themed session around our hopes and dreams for the new year and upcoming decade. In February we looked at the theme of 'What we believe' and had 7 young people attend.

We tried two Zoom sessions in September and October, these were poorly supported and so with the PCC permission a decision was taken to suspend the group until the possible arrival of a new vicar.

Marcus Brookfield led this group with the assistance of Claire Wicks and Lesley Templeman. We have also had help from Adam and Venita Kirkby, Michael Templeman and Jennifer Richards over the course of the year. A huge 'Thank you' to those mentioned above.

Marcus Brookfield

Throwleigh Lodge

Monthly visits were suspended during lockdown but I continued to phone on a monthly basis. There is a new manager and we hope to re-establish contact when we are able to meet again.



Margaret Johnson

Time Out for Tots

The former prayer room continued to be well used as an area for babies and toddlers. This has been well received by those attending various church, school, and community services with young children, as it offered a welcome relief to parents and carers should their children get fractious. Unfortunately following the Covid-19 pandemic, guidance has meant this area has remained closed, with us encouraging families to bring their own activities to potentially engage their children.



Marcus Brookfield

Traidcraft

The Traidcraft stall, like so many other church activities, has had to stop during the



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pandemic. We were fortunate in holding the first two of our planned six stalls in 2020 before the first lock down. Although we were unable to sell Traidcraft goods during the important pre-Christmas season we advertised the Traidcraft online shop www.traidcraftshop.co.uk in the church notices.

Ruth Carter

Twinkle Tots

With Twinkle Tots approaching its fifth year, this group continued to thrive up until the enforced closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic in early March.



This has been a growth area in the church, with several of the parents/carers seeing it as church for them through the Christian input of the group in the way of the songs and the story and prayer time. Weekly numbers of children and parents/carers averaged in the mid-teens to low twenties.

Twinkle Tots is led by Marcus Brookfield with the assistance of Mike Couper, with help in preparing and serving the refreshments particularly from Joan Allen, Angela Murphy, and Inge Weiss

Over the first part of the year prior to closure a core group of mums and carers continued to develop, who care and look out for each other and particularly welcoming any newcomers, which provides a lovely environment.

Marcus Brookfield

Work with Local Schools

In October we hosted a school visit for the year two pupils at St Andrew's School. Unfortunately, the visit could not take its usual format with the children having talks from various people around the church on the different aspects of the church and its life. These were replaced with a PowerPoint presentation and some question and answers with the children. We were also able to have a demonstration of the organ and a mock baptism, plus a short graveyard tour, looking at some of the graves of interest. Thank you to Mike Couper for his support and invaluable help with this.



Marcus Brookfield

Work with Community Groups

In February we hosted one of the local Rainbows groups, the session was themed around a Bible story of Esther and involved



the Rainbows and any siblings in activities linked to the story in Church. We then finished the session with refreshment and the opportunity to do a variety of crafts in St Andrew's Room.

This seemed to be very much appreciated by the leaders and some of the parents/carers who stayed for the session with the girls' siblings.

Thank you to the team who have supported this developing work on top of their other family and Church commitments.

Marcus Brookfield